

HEALTH EQUITY EQUATION NEWSBRIEF

January 2019

Welcome to the 15th edition of Health Equity Equation

Resources:

[The Social Determinants of Health \(SDOH\) group within Healthy People](#) has a new webpage with literature summaries on 19 different topics and lots of national, state, and local resources.

APHA released new health equity [fact sheets](#).

Measuring Discrimination: In equity-focused work in the US, there is a growing call for organizations to recognize and address bias and prejudice that may be deeply embedded in an organization's structure and culture. The flip side of this coin is awareness of the effects of discrimination on those who experience it over a lifetime. Dr. David Williams' report from June 2016, entitled "[Measuring Discrimination Resource](#)," used the Everyday Discrimination Scale as a method to quantify the cumulative effects of discrimination. This work describes the many ways bias may be manifested and perceived by those who experience it.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN DHHS?

Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD):

- DD provided opportunities for public comment on the proposed amendments to the two Medicaid home and community-based developmental disabilities waiver. Opportunities were provided via four webinars, one in-person meeting, and a 30-day posting of the draft amendments to allow for written feedback. The public comment period ended 01/09/2019. The next steps are submission of the proposed amendments to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid for review and approval for a planned implementation of the HCBS DD waivers in the Spring of 2019.
- DD continues to draft a DD Policy Guide to supplement DD regulations and the HCBS waivers, and provide "how-to" processes for information and guidance for the public. When completed, the DD Policy Guide will be posted on the public website.
- DD is continuing to improve the public website and is working with CLS on the system-wide redesign, including simplifying language and eliminating excess or unused items. For more info, contact Pam Hovis, Pam.Hovis@nebraska.gov.

SHIP conducts Health Equity Survey: The workgroup of the State Health Improvement Plan, Health Equity Priority, has been testing a survey approach to identifying the status of organizations regarding equity-focused work, and the need for technical assistance. The survey has grown out of earlier efforts by the Region VII Health Equity Coalition, comprising the states of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas and Missouri. At the end of 2018, the Region VII Health Equity Coalition underwent significant organizational change. The Nebraska team stepped in to pick up the slack. For more information, contact Josie Rodriguez.

2019 Minority Health Conference April 17, 2019. The goal of the conference is to educate professionals statewide about minority health, health equity, and adequately addressing the needs of special populations. The workshops target community health workers, physicians, nurses, other healthcare providers, public health personnel, administrators, and other professionals who are involved or interested in improving minority health and advancing health equity. **Tracks:** Leveraging Innovation in Care Delivery; Delivering High Quality Services; Increasing Quality Care for Special Populations; and Bridging Gaps to Ensure Equitable Care. For more information, click [here](#).

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NEXT HEALTH EQUITY COLLECTIVE IMPACT MEETING:

**Monday,
February 11TH**

10 - 11:30 AM, NSOB 3B
All are welcome!

For more info about **the Health Equity Equation**, and *the Health Equity Collective Impact* group that meets quarterly, contact Mai Dang at mai.dang@nebraska.gov.

Working Definition of “Health Equity”:

Health Equity is when people have full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to lead healthy lives.

Achieving health equity involves an underlying commitment to reduce—and, ultimately, eliminate—disparities in health and in its determinants, including social determinants.

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Community Health Worker (CHW) Workforce Development Updates:

On Nov. 2, 2018, a panel presentation for health professionals, entitled “Transforming Teams to Impact Health,” identified the ways the community health worker role is emerging and spreading in Nebraska. The objectives of the session: described ways that CHWs might make health care teams more effective; areas of innovative and developing practice; and barriers to workforce development. The session was very well received by the audience. Panel members included two public health nurses in leadership positions and a community health worker. The panel was facilitated by DHHS employee Kathy Karsting. The conference was sponsored by the Nebraska Action Coalition – Future of Nursing.

On Dec. 12, 2018, 12 partners from various programs and units in DHHS met for internal networking around the numerous ways DHHS is involved in growing the CHW workforce. Each of the 12 participants could readily describe at least one public health priority CHWs are addressing, or could address. A total of nine discreet program activities, ranging from training, to funding; from defining roles with respect to other health professions, to helping local communities grow projects, were described. While addressing access issues for vulnerable and underserved groups, CHWs also represent a strategy to better address the social determinants of health.

READING CORNER

What’s in a Framework? Equipping organizations to carry out effective equity-focused work may involve change! Having a roadmap or guide may help. One size may not fit all, but from the ***American Public Health Association***, the following six key principles for advancing health equity each packs an impact:

- Be explicit about doing equity work and what changes are sought!
- Identify and Effectively Address Racism and Racial Implicit Biases.
- Adopt a “Health in all Policies” Approach.
- Create an Internal Organization-wide Culture of Equity.
- Respect and Involve Communities in Health Equity Initiatives.
- Measure and Evaluate Progress in Reducing Health Disparities.

This framework is also explicit about naming the social determinants of health and equity: racism and discrimination, education, income, housing, and neighborhood conditions. Find the APHA resource [here](#).